

إِنَّا دِينُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

# THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

*A Journal of Islamic Renaissance  
in America*

## **In This Issue:**

Current Trends in Islamic Thought  
How to Uproot Evil: Some Suggestions  
Ahmadiyya Beliefs: Some Accusations Removed  
The First Muezzin  
Which Islam?  
The Vedas and the Quran  
Jihad: Does It Mean Violence?  
Science: The Islamic Legacy

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# **THE MUSLIM SUNRISE**

## **A JOURNAL OF THE ISLAMIC RENAISSANCE IN AMERICA**

The Muslim Sunrise is a quarterly magazine, founded in 1921 by Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, the first Muslim missionary in the U.S.A. The magazine is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India (1835-1908). The Movement is currently headed by Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad—fourth successor—with Headquarters at Rabwah, Pakistan. The Movement aims at presenting to the world the true meaning and teachings of Islam. The American Headquarters of the Movement are located at the Fazl Mosque, 2141 Leroy Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008.

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## THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

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## A Passage From the Holy Quran

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا  
 وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ  
 آوَوْا وَانْتَصَرُوا أُولَئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَالَّذِينَ  
 آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يُهَاجِرُوا مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ وَلَايَتِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
 حَتَّى يُهَاجِرُوا وَإِنْ اسْتَنْصَرُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ فَعَلَيْكُمْ  
 النَّصْرُ إِلَّا عَلَى قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا  
 تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ\* وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِعَصَاهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضُهُمْ  
 إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوهُ تَكُنْ فِتْنَةٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَفَسَادٌ كَبِيرٌ\*  
 وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ  
 آوَوْا وَانْتَصَرُوا أُولَئِكَ هُمُ السُّومُنُونَ حَقًّا لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ  
 وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ\* وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا  
 مَعَكُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ مِنْكُمْ وَأُولُوا الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَى  
 بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ\*

## Translation

Those who have believed and migrated and striven with their belongings and their persons in the cause of Allah, and those who have given them shelter and help, are friends to one another. But you are under no obligation towards those who have believed and have not migrated, until they migrate. Nevertheless, if they seek your help in the matter of religion it is incumbent on you to help them except against a people between whom and yourselves there is a pact. Allah sees what you do. Those who disbelieve are friends one of another. If you do not as you are commanded, there will be great mischief and disorder in the land. Those who have believed and migrated and striven in the cause of Allah, and those who have given them shelter and help, are the true believers. For them is forgiveness and an honorable provision. Those who believe hereafter, and migrate and strive in the cause of Allah along with you, will be counted among you. Of blood relations some are nearer than others in the Book of Allah. Surely, Allah knows all things well.

*(Al-Anfal: 73-76)*

## Sayings of the Holy Prophet

Hazrat Aiyesha has reported that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon Him) once said, "Jibrael Ameen told me that I should give strict instructions regarding the performance of the rights and obligations of the neighbors, be these neighbors, relatives or strangers or non-Muslims, respect for their rights is, nonetheless essential." (*Bukhari*)

"Protecting themselves from illegal income, Muslims should bring up their children and do good deeds toward neighbors. If they do so, they will appear before Allah on the Day of Judgement with their faces shining bright like the moon." (*Bokhari*)

"Whoever believes in Allah and His Holy Prophet should do good treatment to his neighbors." (*Bokhari*)

"The evidence of his neighbor to the effect that a particular Muslim is a good man, is evidence enough." (*Muslim*)

"Have more soup in the meat that you cook, so that you may give some of it to your poor neighbor also." (*Tirmizi*)

"When the Holy Prophet said thrice, with an oath on his lips that the "Faith is not complete," the companions asked him: "Whose faith, O Prophet of God?" The Holy Prophet replied: "He from whose mischiefs his neighbors are not safe." (*Bokhari and Muslim*)

*Editorial:***CURRENT TRENDS IN ISLAMIC THOUGHT**

The world has been witnessing some dramatic changes in the religious thought in recent decades. The relentless onslaught of materialism, secularism and technology have made a deep impact on their doctrinal thinking as well as their institutions. This global spiritual upheaval has caused profound reactions among the leaders and the followers of various faiths. Consequently a wave of serious doubts is threatening the very foundations of the religious thought.

Of course, roots of the contemporary developments in the religious world go back to several centuries, particularly in the case of Islam. Geoffrey Godsell explains that since the 16th century:

“Islam has been in chronic crisis—a crisis which a non-Muslim might see as stemming from its inability to come to terms with all that has been unleashed on the world (mainly from the West) since the Renaissance.... Today’s assertiveness is in fact defensive.... It is the plangent and defiant cry of the adherents of a great religion which has yet to come to terms theologically and convincingly with today’s world.”<sup>1</sup>

This process of the decline of Islam has been traced and analyzed by several Western scholars. Professor Cyriac K. Pullapilly, of St. Mary’s College, Notre Dame, Indiana, has drawn a historical sketch of Islamic Civilization, published as an introduction to the book entitled “Islam in the Contemporary World”, which he has edited. He observes that the decline of the Ottoman, Safawid and Mughal empires coincided with—in part it was caused by—the rise of European colonialism. In fact, “no part of the Islamic world was spared from European penetration,” he comments. “One reason for the West’s increasing influence in the Islamic world was the appeal of Western science, technology and economic prosperity

to the elite classes and intelligentsia," he concludes.<sup>2</sup> Added to that has been the awesome influence of European philosophy which has been injected in massive quantities in the current Islamic thought. One can easily detect the inroads of Marxism, Socialism and Capitalism in the contemporary Muslim writers.

The traumatic turmoil in the Muslim world has gained a new momentum in the post Second World War period. Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr, professor of religion and Islamic studies at Temple University, considers that:

"The events of the last few years in various parts of the Islamic world have brought the question of the meaning and pertinence of Islam in the contemporary world to the forefront of international concern. Many people who had never known anything about Islam are now faced with the name, if not always the reality, practically from morning to night."<sup>3</sup>

Professor Nasr believes that, "in modern times, forces such as Western-styled nationalism, tribalism, and linguistic affinities" are among several other factors "which have caused a significant variation in the manner and degree of attachment of many Muslims to Islam."<sup>4</sup>

Obviously this tragic decline in the Islamic society has caused deep concern and painful anxiety to the Muslim theologians and religious leaders. Right before their eyes, Islamic institutions which had provided the Muslims in particular, and the world in general, more than a millennium of glorious flowering of spiritual leadership seemed to be disintegrating under the impact of hostile thought.

It is only natural that many possible remedies to the present alarming situation may be presented from different quarters of the Islamic world. There is no shortage of self-righteous leaders claiming to provide the proper course. Unfortunately, their answers carry the built-in element of being reactionary to one or the other of the hostile movements. In this process they are pulled to the opposite extremes of defeatist and apologetic



modernism or rigid and narrow fundamentalism. Both of them pose in disguise as new dangers to Islam.

The Ahmadiyya Movement is blessed with the fact that its founder, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, unlike other self-styled leaders, was divinely ordained to bring about a renaissance of Islam after an unprecedented decline foretold by the Holy Prophet Muhammad some 1400 years ago. The teachings of Hazrat Ahmad have been sustained and nourished by divine revelation and, therefore, immune from dangerous negative reactions. Ahmadies enjoy the unique responsibility of carrying the message of true Islam to mankind. They have been reassured by the Almighty that their services will be crowned with ultimate success.

Let us hope and pray that this trust will be discharged by the followers of Hazrat Ahmad with total commitment and dedication. The present leader of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV, has renewed his call to every Ahmadi to assume a personal responsibility toward this goal. The mountains of obstacles indeed look invincible, but they can certainly be removed by sincere faith and selfless sacrifices.

**Khalil Nasir**

[illegible]

**Footnotes:**

1. Godsell, Geoffrey. "Islam: Legacy and Contemporary Challenge," in *Christian Science Monitor*, International Edition, December 18, 1978.
2. Pullapilly, Cyriac K. (Editor). *Islam in the Contemporary World*. Notre Dame, Indiana, p. XXV. Cross Roads Books.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

## HOW TO UPROOT EVIL: SOME SUGGESTIONS

by

**Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad**

(Being an excerpt from the English translation of a speech by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Second Successor to the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, at the annual International Conference on December 27 and 28, 1925. The lecture was delivered in Urdu. It was originally published under the title of *Minhaj-ut-Taalibin*. An English edition entitled *Ways of the Seekers* has been published by the American center of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam in 1982.)

### **Istighfar: Praying for Forgiveness**

The primary remedy lies in *Istighfar*—in seeking God's forgiveness by invoking His attribute of covering up and forgiving sins. *Istighfar* has two aspects. In one, the sinner seeks divine forgiveness for the sins he has committed in the past, or prays to ward off sins to which he is a prey.

In the other, the person concerned prays to God that his tendency towards sin be suppressed altogether and not even a vestige of sin should touch him through His grace. It is in this sense that Prophets seek *istighfar* of God.

### **Deeper and Deeper Knowledge of God**

One should have true knowledge with an enlightened understanding of divine attributes and allow them to envelope one's soul and study them at close quarters and try to imbibe their true spirit. For instance, while contemplating His grace, one should recall the bounties one has received from Him and

say: Why should I not give to His creatures that which He, His infinite grace has given to me? Such reflection would inspire him with resistance to evil and love of virtue.

### **Reflection on Consequences of Good and Bad Actions**

One should reflect on the good consequences of virtue and bad consequences of evil. One should visualize how virtue ultimately yields good and vice harmful results. This would help one acquire knowledge of good and evil.

### **Taubah (Repentance)**

The next step is *Tauba*, or repentance before God with an awakened conscience. *Taubah* means:

1. Genuine remorse over past sins. This is a permanent state of the heart.
2. Fulfilling the obligations that were left unfulfilled. For instance, to perform pilgrimage to the Kaaba if it has not been performed already. But neglect of prayer cannot be made good like this. For such default the only recourse left is to seek forgiveness of God.
3. Seeking pardon of each person affected by the sinner's defaults, such as God has caused to be forgotten.
4. Doing compensatory favors to those who have suffered at one's hands.
5. Firm resolve not to commit an evil act again.

These are, in fact the conditions precedent to *Tauba* which is granted only if these conditions are adequately fulfilled.

The Holy Prophet, peace be on him, has directed:

*“Takhallaqoo bi Akhlaqillah:*

*Adorn yourselves with divine qualities.”*

One should not worry too much if the heart is not in it. One

should persist in doing good as a duty. One should continue to be charitable, even if charitable acts hurt one. One should go on praying even when one is unable to concentrate. The important thing to remember is that duties must be performed with studied intent and without losing heart. The Promised Messiah—on him be peace—used to relate this story which I have also related a number of times:

A disciple once visited his spiritual preceptor and mentor and stayed the night with him. The preceptor spent a great part of the night in supplicating and at the end the disciple heard God's response that the supplication was rejected. He was shocked, thinking that the preceptor was not a good guide since his prayers had been rejected although people came to him to request for prayers. However, he kept his counsel and said nothing. The next night the same thing happened. The preceptor prayed through the greater part of the night and received the same reply. The same performance was repeated the third night. Now the disciple could keep silent no longer and asked the preceptor: You have been praying for the last three nights. Every time you pray, God replies that your prayer shall not be heard. Why do you persist in offering the same prayer again and again? The preceptor replied: You do not know that I have been offering the same prayers for the last twenty years and I have not lost patience. You have heard the divine answer only three times and have lost hope. My business is to pray. It is for God to accept or not to accept. He is doing His will as I am doing my duty. It so happened that on the fourth night the divine response came: All the prayers you have made so far are granted. Thus a man's duty is to continue to pray under all conditions and never give up. Not unoften, an act of external virtue initiates an inner process which gradually wipes out a person clean.

Should this too fail to help; resolutions are made and broken, a rise is followed by a fall, every effort meets with a reverse; it should be known for certain that a spiritual rot has set in and the heart needs a detailed and full remedial treatment. It

should be realized that evil has triumphed and the sinner. His self-respect has died and he is like an animal who is led by the nose. His lower self has attained mastery over him and leads him with impunity. In such a case remedial treatment not on a short-term but on a long-term basis is needed. Before I proceed to outline this treatment I would like to point out the hitherto current philosophy of morals among the Muslims and the one expounded from the Ahmadiyya point of view. Ibn Mardweh, may Allah have mercy on him, is considered the founder of Muslim ethics. He wrote a regular treatise on the subject. After him, Ibn Arabi—may Allah have mercy on him—is considered the greatest thinker on the subject. He was followed by Imam Ghazali—may Allah have mercy on him—who wrote a compendium on the subject which runs into as many as four volumes. He is supposed to have pronounced the last word on the subject. I would like to throw some light on the subject to enable the student of today to appreciate the errors in the earlier expositions. In their own day, their views were valid, but today they need to be modified.

The basic difference between the moral philosophy of Al-Ghazali and the Ahmadiyya moral philosophy is that the former emphasizes negative values while the latter is essentially positive in character. This change in approach was brought about by the Promised Messiah—on him be peace. He pointed out that morals do not merely mean the absence of evil but also the presence of Good. It is not denied that self-control is a road to morality, but it is not the only road. While contemplating the philosophy of morals we cannot ignore certain factors some of which are as follows. God says:

*"I have created men, high and low, that they may worship Me."*(51:57)

Again He says:

*"Those who prove fortunate shall be in the Garden, abiding therein so long as the heaven and the earth shall endure, excepting that which thy Lord may will. This is a bounty which shall never be cut off."*(11:109)

This shows man was created not for not doing certain things but for doing certain things. Hence our creation has a positive and not a negative purpose. Negation is at best a precaution. It means to remove the obstacles which stand in the way of the realization of the ultimate goal. It is a means, never an end. If the purpose of man's creation was no more than negation or extinction, where was the need for his creation? This purpose was being served better without his creation. The situation is similar to the one in Hindu Theology in which God is described as not-this and not-that. Man was created not to negate but to affirm, always accepting negation to be a means, never the end. Therefore, the real issue is what should man become, not what he should not become.

Secondly, it is agreed that the ego is like a horse. True, the horse has to be exercised. Within reasonable limits it has to be kept lean but not too lean; fit enough to ride yet not so unruly as to throw the rider. But have you ever seen someone who should have become a good horseman merely by starving the horse? Once during a journey, one of our party who was not much of a horseman, declared he would not ride unless a lean horse was procured for him. Accordingly a lean horse was brought. He appeared to be afraid of this horse too and wanted to know if there was no leaner horse available. Therefore, if a person does not know riding, he cannot learn it by starving the horse. Similarly it is a mistake to believe that by starving the ego, you can tame it or can make it obey your commands. You control the ego not by starving it, but by learning the art of controlling it.

Thirdly, it is no use denying that sin is the result not only of the domination of the ego but also of the death of the ego. For instance, shamelessness is caused by the death of the ego. In such cases the ego needs to be revived to enable it to function as required.

Thus the ego is like a horse. To make it function properly, sometimes it should be allowed to become lean and sometimes it needs to be fattened. It should neither be completely

demolished nor should it be permitted to become too headstrong to obey.

The Promised Messiah's approach to morals differs from Al-Ghazali's in another respect also. The Promised Messiah—on him be peace—emphasized that the basis of faith is hope and anticipation. The Holy Quran does indeed say that faith lies between hope and fear but nowhere does it say that it lies between hope and despair. About despair, the Holy Quran even says:

*"O my sons, go ye and search for Joseph and his brother and despair not of the mercy of Allah; for none despairs of Allah's mercy but the unbelieving people."*(12:88)

The Holy Prophet—on him be peace—is reported to have said that God will treat His servant as he expects to be treated. Therefore, no system which breeds despair could be called Islamic. We should also be very watchful about fear. It must never exceed hope which should outweigh fear. Fear certainly is a part of faith but is never as big a part as hope. Allah says:

*"I shall inflict My chastisement on those concerning whom I so determine; but My mercy encompasses all things."*(7:157)

In the heart of the faithful, hope should, therefore, dominate over fear.

The heart of a believer is full of hope. He is afraid but not as much as he is hopeful. He is convinced that God will not be so harsh as to let him perish. In truth he is afraid not because he doubts God's mercy but because of his own faults. His hope proceeds from his faith in divine grace. Is it not true that our faults appear insignificant when compared to the grace of God? In other words, if a believer fears God because of his Self-Sufficiency. If he fears God because of his own weakness, let him not forget that Allah's might is overwhelmingly greater than his weakness. In either case, hope reigns supreme, for the source from which it springs is stronger than that of fear.

But it must be remembered that hope is for those who submit, not for those who rebel. You cannot continue doing whatever you please and yet hope to win God's grace; for that would be rebellion and there can be no hope for the rebellious. Indeed hope is only for those who submit.

Also remember, the believer fears God not because he is not sure he will not be able to perform a certain action or that he will be punished if he does not perform it. He is afraid because he is not too sure if the course he is following will really lead him to success. Nor does he fear because of his failure to act in a certain manner and of the consequent punishment. He is afraid that he will not be able to win divine grace if he fails to perform the action as God expects him to do.

In short, Islamic mysticism is based on hope and fear, hope being the dominant factor. Positive forces are released only by hope. Fear can generate nothing more than negative forces. Since the real purpose of man's creation is to generate the love of God, that can be done only by hope. Fear can at best ward off sins. Islam seeks to dispel fear. We have seen that the Holy Quran assures us:

*"My mercy encompasses everything."* (7:157)

Then the Holy Prophet—on whom be peace—clarified the position still further. He said that cheering dreams proceed from God and frightening dreams proceed from Satan. Since the impact of dreams on the mind is undeniable, he warned that we should not be afraid of frightening dreams since their source is satanic. This certainly does not mean that every dream of that kind is satanic as Prophets too have such dreams. The idea is that if there is a multiplicity of dreams of this kind, to the total or near total exclusion of hope-inspiring dreams, it should be presumed that they are satanic in nature. Thus the Holy Prophet—on him be peace—sought to remove fear from the hearts of the faithful. There is, however, the risk that a person who dreams such dreams, may have a true dream for once and dismiss it to his loss as satanic. The Holy Prophet—on him be peace—has also pointed the way out. He said:



When a believer happens to experience a dream of this nature, he should turn over to his left side and spit out and recite:

*La haula wa la quvvata illa billah*

(There is no security against ill and no strength to achieve good except through Allah).

The point he has made is a subtle one. When we spit at something, actually or figuratively, we mean to reject it as unworthy of our attention. By his advice, to spit out, the Holy Prophet—on him be peace—has inspired the faithful with courage and hope. There is every possibility that among many such dreams one may on occasion be true. The recitation taught by him is, therefore, very significant, in so far as it provides an occasion to seek divine forgiveness and strengthen trust in God. The symbolic rejection safeguards against the evil effects of satanic dreams. Similarly the recitation of *Lahaul* shields us from the consequences of divine warning. By reciting *Lahaul*, we completely surrender ourselves to God and thus escape His wrath. This twofold treatment should dispel all fear. Behold, how beautifully the Holy Prophet—on him be peace—has secured the faithful against surrendering to fear.

This brief exposition would mark the difference between Al-Ghazali's view and the view of the Promised Messiah (Peace be on him).

Now I shall revert to the appropriate remedies for the treatment of those who are spiritually sick and are incapable of moral action having failed despite effort. But let me first remove one misconception. It may be asked: If such persons are incapable of right action, what benefit could such remedial advice bring them?

First, unless and until, right action becomes a physical impossibility, salvation lies in trying and continuing to try to do right. In case such action does in fact become a physical impossibility, purity may be achieved without action. For example, the insane are incapable of performing moral actions. For such, the Holy Prophet—on him be peace—has said there will be provided opportunities.

Actions are of two kinds: those that can be performed in all conditions, and those that cannot be performed in certain conditions of the heart. The latter category are related to thought and emotions. The former are never impossible, for they are external in nature. For instance, no one can say that he or she cannot perform the external act of prayer. But a person could no doubt say that it is not possible for him to banish illicit love from his heart. Thus there are these two categories of actions, those involving the emotions, and those not involving the emotions.

We know how physical ailments are treated. When the doctor prescribes physical exercise for a weak patient who is unfit to do any work, does he tell the doctor how can he take exercise being unfit to do any work? He does not say this because there is a difference between the work which he is unfit to do and the exercise the doctor prescribes. Both require effort but one is within his capacity while the other is not. Even to augment physical energy, action is needed. A patient who is too weak to get up and is permanently bedridden would naturally be prescribed exercise consistent with his condition. Maybe the doctor would only prescribe massage. When he gains some strength, he would be able to sit up and when he is a little stronger he would stand up.

The same obtains in the spiritual sphere. A spiritual patient also begins with minor actions and progressively rises to higher levels. If a student finds the 10th class reader too difficult, he is advised to study the 9th class reader. He cannot say: Since I cannot read the 10th class reader, how can I read the one meant for the 9th class? In the spiritual sphere also progress is made from lower to higher levels of action.

Such cases need special remedial treatment which I shall outline presently. But preliminary measures have to be taken which I have already mentioned and which are as follows:

1. Acquisition of thorough knowledge of right and wrong, virtue and vice.
2. Knowledge of appropriate use of each.

3. Self-examination.
4. Frequent recourse to *Istighfar*.
5. Effort to acquire cognition of God.
6. Reflection over the consequences of good and evil actions.
7. Effort to reflect divine qualities.

I shall now outline principles of treatment of such cases. Without doubt, such a person is spiritually sick. Sickness cannot be treated without proper diagnosis. The patient should first determine what is his ailment. Then he should ask himself what does he wish to achieve. The answer is likely to be two-fold: purity of heart and reform of conduct. The former is related to the love of God. The sickness of the heart signifies the extinction of the capacity to love. I have related a vision of mine on a number of occasions. I saw Jesus —peace be on him—standing on a raised platform. He looked like a child and raised his hands towards heaven. I also saw his mother Maryam (Mary)—on her be peace—descend from above and stand on a higher portion of the platform. Then she took a step downward and Jesus raised himself a step and leaned towards Mary. In response, she too leaned over him. At that instant, the following words issued from my mouth: Love creates love.

Thus love creates love; but love is inspired by:

1. Beauty.
2. Benevolence.

Now imagine a person who witnesses the beauty of God, reflects over His attributes, receives His gracious favors and is conscious of God's relationship with him but fails to respond with love. He would be like a child who does not love his mother. The capacity to love has died within him. He is like a sick person who cannot tolerate medicine or nourishment as his stomach is out of order. The first step towards his restoration would, therefore, be to tone up his stomach. The same thing is true of one who is spiritually sick. His emotions should

be stimulated. As an overt act induces an inner reaction, let him assume an attitude of humility and entreaty, at least externally. In his prayers let him put on a pitiful expression even artificially; for even such action induces a corresponding state in the mind. This is illustrated by the case of an American principal of a college, who had been a brilliant student but proved an utter failure as principal. He consulted a psychologist who told him his failure was due to his excessive leniency, which prevented him maintaining discipline. He was advised to simulate sternness and look tough with set jaws and compressed teeth. He followed the advice and within a short time he came to be known as a most successful principal.

If a coward starts strutting about he would develop courage and bravery. Soldiers are trained along these lines. They have to practice marching with their chests pushed out and their chins aloft. This develops their courage.

The first remedy, therefore, is that he who suffers from a default should artificially induce the corresponding quality; this would equip him with that quality. To develop love, he should make manifest an attitude of love. For instance, his handshake would be firm and fervent. When a visitor wants to leave, he should insist on his staying on, even though he should desire his departure. When his behavior begins to exhibit the external signs of love, he would gradually develop the faculty of love. He would then begin to love God also, which he could not do before, because, he had lacked the faculty of love altogether.

He should also intensify his love for his parents and children. This is the love which the Sufis have described as *majazi* or reflective love, true love being the love of God. It is in this sense that mystics called it reflective love. They meant to emphasize and intensify this kind of love as it was legitimate love. Later the meaning of this term became corrupted. *Majazi* or reflective love does not mean to fall prey to love that is not permissible and lawful. It means loving intensely those relatives whom one may love legitimately. This will augment

the faculty of love and foster the love of God.

The second factor in spiritual reform is improvement in the quality of action. In this context it should be remembered that action is directed by the will. One determines to do. One determines to do something and does it. The helplessness of a person who wishes to do something but finds himself unable to do it may derive from one of three causes.

1. He may have lost control over his will. His ego may have become too weak to effectively rule over his will. The ego is the master and the will is its agent. The master has become too weak to direct the agent to have something carried out, and fights shy of the agent. The agent thus becomes lax in requiring performance.
2. The ego or the master is not weak, but the will or the agent is sick and has lost control over the emotions which are like servants of the will. When the agent falls ill, the servants become lax and refuse to obey. In other words, the communication between the ego and emotions is impaired.
3. Something intervenes between the will and the emotions. The will, the power to direct and the emotions are ready to obey, but communication between the two is interrupted. Either the intervening distance has become too great, or some other hindrance stands in the way and the orders of the will do not reach the emotions. Thus sinfulness and lack of virtue could mean:
  - a. Weakness of the ego, or
  - b. Weakness of the will, or
  - c. Some intervention which nullifies the control of the will over the emotions. For instance, a smoker may have the will to give up smoking but when he sees the pipe, he cannot help himself and succumbs to his habit.

*(To be continued)*

## **AHMADIYYA BELIEFS: SOME ALLEGATIONS CORRECTED**

By  
Zafar Ahmad Chaudhry

(The author is a former Air Marshal of Pakistan's Armed Forces. This article aims to state the basic faith and beliefs of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. It also attempts to set out the real positions with regard to certain allegations usually made by critics who are either themselves poorly informed or seek deliberately to mislead others).

The basic reality is that so far as faith is concerned, a person is what he sincerely and honestly believes himself to be, and not what he may be branded as by others. A label forcibly affixed by others can be annoying, but it cannot by one iota change the reality or content of one's belief. This should be obvious to any thinking person. As faith is a matter of conscience, it is simply not possible to dictate to others or impose anything upon them; how beautifully has this reality been expressed in the Holy Quran which lays bare the precept that "In faith there is no compulsion." The necessary corollary of this is that everyone is free to believe as he chooses and no one has any right to question his profession of it. Faith and belief come from within and are not decreed from without. So, it is idle to sit in judgment on someone's faith—this is a matter between the individual and his Maker.

We Ahmadis not only claim, but most sincerely, unreservedly and passionately believe that we are Muslims, and we not only in all earnestness subscribe to all the basic tenets of Islam, but also strive to practice them in our daily lives. As the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement has said:

**"We observe the Muslim Faith and serve The Seal of The Messengers with all our heart."**

To those who are not blinded by prejudice or hatred, may we suggest that they spend a few minutes in studying a description of our faith at the end of this article (pp. 26-29). This is a summary of what we Ahmadies actually believe and have always believed. We feel you will find this enlightening and it will dispel many doubts and much confusion created by our detractors.

We would also like to present our point of view with regard to certain assertions and allegations commonly made against the Ahmadiyya Muslims. We would leave the reader to draw his own conclusions, for we know that truth cannot remain masked forever.

#### ALLEGATION:

"The Qadianis brand any person *Kafir* who does not acknowledge Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as prophet, in the same way as Jews and Christians were. - - - They are very clear in this respect."

#### FACT:

This allegation is wholly wrong. The founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement has said, and all his followers strictly believe:

"From the very beginning it has been my faith that the rejection of my claim does not reneader anyone a Kafir or Dajjaal. - - - I do not call anyone Kafir who pronounces the Kalimah. - - - If I am a Muslim in the eyes of God, then those who call me Kafir only render themselves Kafir in accordance with the Holy Prophet's edict in the matter. - - - My faith in reality is that I do not regard any Muslim as Kafir." (*Tiryaqul Qulub*, pp 258-260)

Is anything else needed to put the matter beyond doubt?

#### ALLEGATION:

The Ahamdies have desecrated the Kalimah by abridging it

and eliminating from it the second part, *Muhammadur Rasul Ullah*.

#### FACT:

The Ahmadis believe in nothing if they do not most sincerely and whole-heartedly believe in the Kalimah in its entirety. This is clearly demonstrated by the inscription of Kalimah Shahadat (the fuller form of Kalimah Tayyab) on the Ahmadiyya Bait Form reproduced in the MAG article. Thus, no one can enter the Ahmadiyya Community without first affirming the Kalimah in its entirety. The founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement never tired of emphasizing the absolute need for believing in the Holy Prophet, which, in common with all Muslims, he regarded as the cornerstone of Islam. Just one instance of his passionate feeling in this regard is in one of his Persian couplets:

“That after God, I am drunk with the love of Muhammad; and if this be Kufr, I swear I am the worst Kafir.”

However, it is perfectly permissible and proper to pronounce *La ilaha illallah* on its own by way of Zikr; in fact the Holy Prophet has said:

“The best of pronouncements is La Ilaha Illallah.”

While Kalimah Tayyaba is undoubtedly the foundation of Islam, it is not correct to assert that the entire Kalimah should be recited in each and every case, and that *La ilaha illallah* can never be pronounced on its own. Were this so, the Azan would not have ended with: *La ilaha illallah*.

#### ALLEGATION:

Examples are cited of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's revelations and writings and these are termed as, “nonsense and rubbish.”

#### FACT:

Some of the quotations normally cited are fabrications while others are taken completely out of context to mislead the reader. We would all do well to follow the Quranic admonition



of "And, say the right word," and not resort to flippant acrimony, especially in such grave and weighty matters. It should be remembered that the form of expression employed in revelations and visions is often metaphorical, symbolic and illustrative, and it would be clearly wrong in each case to interpret it literally and in physical terms. The Holy Quran and the pronouncements of the Holy Prophet contain many illustrations of this form of expression. The Holy Quran says:

"He it is Who has sent down to thee the Book; in it there are verses that are firm and decisive in meaning—they are the basis of the Book—and there are others that are susceptible of different interpretations. But those in whose hearts is perversity pursue such thereof as are susceptible of different interpretations, seeking to cause discord and seeking wrong interpretation of it. And none knows its right interpretation except Allah and those who are firmly grounded in knowledge; they say "we believe in it; the whole is from our Lord"—And none take heed except those gifted with understanding. AL'IMRAN - Verse 8.

Some ignorant critics quote many "names" given to Hazrat Mirza Sahib and hold them to ridicule. Such appellations are commonplace in our religious terminology, for they only seek to highlight the various character attributes and personality traits of the individual so described. The Holy Prophet has been given some 99 such names—and why not, for not even these can do justice to the most sublime of all creation. How appropriately has a poet said of the Holy Prophet:

"You have the handsome looks of Joseph, the healing touch of Jesus and the Glowing Hand of Moses. They shared these attributes severally, but you possess them all."

So, if some others, of a much lower stature, are also assigned a few symbolic and descriptive names, surely this would be wholly appropriate and not a matter to ridicule.

## ALLEGATION:

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a seed sown by the British and on the basis of a "revelation," he declared Jihad forbidden.

## FACT:

The first target of Hazrat Mirza Sahib's crusade of the pen were those Christians who did not believe in the absolute unity of God. He was the foremost defender of Islam against the onslaught of the Christian missionaries in India, who, in their dismay, eventually dragged him to court on false charges. Would this have been the case if he were really a British "plant" against the Muslims? True, he praised the British Government for having restored religious liberty to the Muslims after it had been most cruelly trampled upon in the Punjab by the Sikh rulers. This was only fair and proper for the Muslims could once again call the Azan and offer prayers in congregation and follow the dictates of their religion without let or hindrance, after this liberty had been denied them for so long. As for Jihad, he explained that there were various forms of Jihad which were incumbent upon every Muslim—the Jihad against one's self being the greatest of them all. He emphasized that Jihad with the "sword" was permitted only when certain essential pre-conditions had been fully met, as clearly stipulated in the Holy Quran. He held (as did almost all enlightened Muslims of India) that these conditions had not been met in British India and, therefore, opposition to the British or the followers of other faiths with the "sword" would be wholly wrong. Virtually the same sentiment was expressed at various times by many prominent Muslims, including Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Allama Iqbal and Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

## ALLEGATION:

A system worse than Ayub Khan's basic democracy system was adopted to elect the Khalifa. But this election instead of filling the gap has caused a serious split in the Jamaat itself.

**FACT:**

Islam does not lay down a specific method or system for the selection of the Khalifa—suffice it to recount that all four of the Khulafa-i-Rashideen after the Holy Prophet Muhammad were selected in different ways. The method and rules under which the present Khalifa Mirza Tahir Ahmad was elected recently had been agreed, promulgated and widely circulated some thirty years ago. It may be mentioned that these rules do not permit anyone to declare his candidature or for there to be any canvassing in this regard. Mirza Tahir Ahmad was elected by an overwhelming majority of the authorized electoral college, leaving no doubt at all as to the choice of the Community. True, other names were also proposed, but this only shows that the election was fair and democratic and that the electoral body was not a mere rubber-stamp. Since the election, a marked fervor and renewed dedication are evident among the Community, which has never stood more united. There is simply no question of a "serious split," however much our detractors might imagine this to be the case. All those whose names were proposed for Khilafat offered their Bait (allegiance) to Mirza Tahir Ahmad.

It is sometimes alleged by our dishonest detractors that Ahmadis are in league with Israel, where they maintain a "mission." Nothing can be more absurd and slanderous. The fact is that a very large number of Muslim Arabs continue to live in areas under the sway of Israel. Similarly, some local Arab Ahmadies also continue to live there and are members of the local branch of the Ahmadiyya Movement that was established long before Israel came into existence. If other Muslims can continue living in Israel, why cannot the local Ahmadies? In the face of these facts, if someone should still accuse the Ahmadis of complicity with Israel, can he be called anything other than dishonest? By all means we should inquire and question, but our tools in this endeavor should be facts and reason, not blind prejudice and ignorance.

The foregoing has been, according to us, a sincere and candid

attempt to state the truth about the Community's doctrinal position and to refute some allegations so unjustly levelled against us. Any person still unsure of who and what the Ahmadis are, has but to approach any Ahmadi and question him about his beliefs and observe the form and manner of his worship. He could also, with advantage, study the writings of the founder of the Movement. He will, then, surely, see for himself how unfair and malicious are our detractors, as exemplified by the political clergy in Pakistan.

The basic doctrines of the Ahmadies may be summarized as follows in the words of the Founder of the Movement:

- 1 . "The summary and essence of our faith is that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Our belief that we profess in this life and with which, through the favor of God Almighty, we shall pass on to the next life, is that our lord and master, Muhammad, the chosen one, peace be on him, is the Seal of the Prophets and best of Messengers, at whose hands the faith was perfected and the bounty was completed through which by treading the straight path, a person can reach God Almighty. We believe with absolute certainty that the Holy Quran is the last of the heavenly books and that not a word or vowel point of its laws and limits and commandments can be added to or subtracted from. No revelation can now be received from God which can have the effect of modifying or abrogating the commandments of the Holy Quran, or of changing any single one of its directions. Anyone who thinks otherwise is, according to us, not a believer, and is a heretic and kafir. We also believe that even the lowest stage of the straight path cannot become available to a person without following the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, let alone the higher stages of that path. We cannot attain to any stage of honor and perfection or of nearness to God except through the

true and perfect following of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him. Whatever is bestowed upon me is by way of reflection and through the Holy Prophet. (*Izalah Auham*, pp. 69-70)."

- 2 . "The five pillars on which Islam is based are part of our faith. We hold fast to the word of God, the Holy Quran, to which we are commanded to hold fast. Like Farooq, may Allah be pleased with him, we announce that the Book of Allah suffices us, and like Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, when there is a difference between the Quran and hadith, we give priority to the Quran. We believe that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah and that our lord and master, Muhammad the chosen one, peace be on him, is His Messenger and is Khatamul Anbiya. We believe in angels, the resurrection of the soul, the day of judgement, heaven and hell. We believe that whatever the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, has said, is true. We believe that whoever subtracts the smallest particle from the law of Islam or adds to it, or lays the foundation of neglecting obligations and of indifference towards them, is without faith and is turned away from Islam. I admonish the members of my community that they should have true faith in the credo that there is no God beside Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and that they should die in this faith. They should believe in all prophets and all books, the truth of which is affirmed by the Holy Quran. They should perform the salat, observe the fast, pay the zakat, perform the pilgrimage and carry out all that God Almighty and His Messenger have prescribed and should abstain from all that they have forbidden and thus conform in every respect to Islamic commandments. We consider it our duty to accept all that is supported by the consensus of the righteous ones who have passed away and all that is considered as part of Islam by the consensus of the Ahl-i-Sunnat.

We call to witness the heaven and earth that this is our religion. (*Ayyamus-Solh*, pp 86-87)."

- 3 . The Ahmadies regard Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the Reformer of the Age. His mission and his status, in his own words are:

"As a result of the state of the world which is full of transgression, sin and corruption of all kinds, the Almighty commissioned me to propagate the truth and correct these ills. This was when the Thirteenth Century was ending and the world was ushering in the Fourteenth. Then, in compliance of this direction, I raised a voice, through writings and speeches, that it was I who was to come from God for reviving the faith at the head of this century. This, so that the faith that had disappeared from the earth should be re-established and, with the strength received from God and with the pull of His hand, I should draw the world to honesty, piety and rectitude, and rid the people of their errors, both of belief and conduct. And when some years had lapsed upon this, it was laid open to me through Divine revelation that I am the MASIH who had been promised to the Ummat from the beginning, and also that last MAHDI who in an age of Islam's decline and prevailing corruption, was destined, with direct guidance from God, to serve afresh to humanity the same Heavenly repast, and whose advent had been prophesied by the Holy Prophet thirteen hundred years ago. The Lord's communications and discourse in this regard were so clear and oft-repeated that the matter was placed beyond all doubt. Each revelation I received penetrated my heart like an iron spike, and these revelations were replete with grand prophecies that were fulfilled manifestly as the light of the day. Their number and continuity and the marvel of their miraculous content compelled me to affirm that this was the word of the same One and Only God whose

word is the Holy Quran. (*Tazkara-Tush-Shahadatain*)."

- 4 . "I swear upon God that just as He spoke to Ibraheem, Ishaq, Ismaeel, Yaqub, Yusuf, Musa, Isa and last of all to our Prophet, (on whom be peace and blessings of God) and sent to him the most illuminating and the most sanctified of all revelations — similarly, He has conferred upon me the bounty of His revelation. But, this I have received through complete obedience of the Holy Prophet. If I had not belonged to his Ummat and not faithfully followed his way, then, even if my good deeds had been as great as the mountains of the whole world, I would certainly not have been honored with this bounty. This is so because all prophethood now stands terminated, save that of Muhammad; no law-bearing prophet can now appear, but there can be a prophet who is not law-bearing, provided he first belongs to the Ummat of the Holy Prophet. Thus, on this basis, I am both an Ummati and a prophet, but my prophethood, which means receipt of intimate revelation from God, is a reflection of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet—and it is nothing whatsoever besides this. So, what has appeared in me is really Muhammad's prophethood. (*Tajalliyat-i-Ilahiya*, pp. 24)."



## THE FIRST MUEZZIN

One of the most characteristic—and stirringly evocative—symbols of Islam is the *adhan*, the Arabic call to prayer, dramatically intoned by a muezzin from high atop of lofty minaret. Heard once, it is never forgotten.

The use of the *adhan* goes back to the life time of the Prophet Muhammad, and is mentioned once the Quran in connection with the Friday assembly:

O believers, when proclamation is made for prayer on the Day of Congregation, hasten to God's remembrance and leave trafficking aside; that is better for you, did you but know. (62:9)

Muslim tradition supplies the story of how the *adhan* came to be used to announce the times of the five daily prayers. After the emigration of Muhammad and his followers from Makkah (Mecca) to Medina—which is called the *Hijra*—a believer named 'Abd Allah ibn Zaid had a vision in which he tried to buy a wooden clapper to summon people to prayer. But the man who had the clapper advised him to call out to the people instead and to cry:

God is most great! God is most great!  
 I testify that there is no god but God.  
 I testify that Muhammad is the Apostle of God.  
 Come to prayer! Come to prayer!  
 Come to salvation! Come to salvation!  
 God is most great! God is most great!  
 There is no god but God.

According to Ibn Ishaq, the eighth-century biographer of the Prophet, Ibn Zaid went to Muhammad with his story and Muhammad, approving, told him to ask an Ethiopian named Bilal, who had a marvelous voice, to call the Muslims to prayer. As Ibn Ishaq told the story (in Albert Guillaume's translation):



When the Apostle was told of this he said that it was a true vision if God so willed it, and that he should go to Bilal and communicate it to him so that he might call to prayer thus, for he had a more penetrating voice. When Bilal acted as muezzin, 'Umar I, who later became the second caliph, heard him in the house and came to the Apostle ... saying that he had seen precisely the same vision. The Apostle said 'God be praised for that!'

Though slightly different versions of the story exist, all agree that Islam's first muezzin was Bilal. But who was this man whom the sources credit with such a key role in the nascent Muslim community?

Actually, very little is known. Bilal ibn Rabah, an Ethiopian, was born in Makkah sometime in the late sixth century, of very humble parentage, and was one of the first inhabitants of Makkah to accept the religion that a local merchant named Muhammad—the Prophet—began to preach there around the year 610.

According to Ibn Ishaq, Bilal suffered for his immediate acceptance of Muhammad's message. In fact Bilal's master, Umayya ibn Khalaf reportedly, "would bring him out at the hottest part of the day and throw him on his back in the open valley and have a great rock put on his chest; then he would say to him 'You will stay here till you die or deny Muhammad and worship al-Lat and al-'Uzza'" (pre-Islamic goddesses).

Bilal, however, would not renounce Islam and eventually Abu Bakr, later the most distinguished of the Prophet's Companions and the first Caliph, rescued him.

In 622, the year of the *Hijra*, Bilal also migrated to Medina and over the next decade accompanied the Prophet on all military expeditions, serving, tradition says, as the Prophet's mace-bearer and steward, but also as a muezzin revered by Muslims for his majestically sonorous renditions of the *adhan*.

Bilal's finest hour came in January, 630, on an occasion

regarded as one of the most hallowed moments in Islamic history. After the Muslim forces had captured Makkah, the Prophet's muezzin ascended to the top of the Ka'ba to call the believers to prayer—the first time the call to prayer was heard within Islam's holiest city.

There is confusion about what happened to Bilal after the death of the Prophet in 632. Abu Bakr succeeded the Prophet as head of the Muslim community, and some sources say that Bilal acted as Abu Bakr's muezzin but subsequently declined to serve his successor, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, in the same capacity. Other authors say the Prophet's death signaled the end of Bilal's career as a muezzin, and that he called the faithful to prayer only twice more in his life—once in Syria, to honor the visiting 'Umar, and a second time, in Medina, when he was specifically asked to do so by the Prophet's grandsons.

What seems clear is that at some point Bilal accompanied the Muslim armies to Syria and that he died there between 638 and 642, though the exact date of death and place of burial are disputed.

Yet if there is some disagreement concerning the hard facts of Bilal's life and death, his importance on a number of levels is incontestable. Muezzin guilds, especially those in Turkey and Africa, have traditionally venerated the original practitioner of their noble profession, and African Muslims as a whole feel a special closeness and kinship to him; he was an Ethiopian, after all, who had been exceptionally close to the Prophet, and is a model of steadfastness and devotion to the faith. The story of Bilal, in fact, remains the classic and most frequently cited demonstration that in the Prophet's eyes, the measure of a man was neither nationality nor social status, but piety.

(Barry Hoberman in *Aramco World Magazine*, Vol. 34, No.4, July-August 1983.)

## CURRENT TOPICS:

### WHICH ISLAM?

In Karachi less than a dozen people have died in fighting between Shia and Sunni Muslims over the ownership of a mosque. A few cars were burnt, a cinema building was set ablaze and curfew was imposed on a section of the city. Police confiscated 17 acid filled bottles, 26 knives, four pistols and a quantity of bullets from the Allah-fearing *namazis* (worshippers) who had gone to the mosque to pray falling down "prostrating themselves and weeping" (The Quran, 19:58). According to Reuters, the fighting began when Sunnis gathered outside the mosque and threw stones. The battle escalated when Shias started shooting from inside the mosque.

It is a minor incident when compared to the subcontinental tradition where we kill each other on a grand scale. The casualty list did not run even into three figures. so the news of this paltry riot was not found worthy of front-page treatment by the Indian Press. But Pakistani Sunnis are agitated. Is it not Iraq's Sunni Saddam Hussein who is the target of Shia chauvinism? Referring to Saddam Hussein, Ayatullah Ruhullah Khomeini said: "This is a war between Islam and blasphemy."

The Sunni organization, *Swad-i-Azam Ahl-i-Sunnat* is naturally worried about the future of the Sunni majority of Pakistan and has demanded that Pakistan should be declared a Sunni State as the Shias form only 2 percent of the population. But who is a Sunni? Will the *Ahl-i-Sunnat wal Jamaat* who follow Maulana Shah Ahmad Raza Khan of Bareli accept the Sunnis of Deoband persuasion? In the Sunni state of Pakistan what will be the position of a Head of State who follows the great Muslim scholar Maulana Abul Ala Maududi whose ideas have been very severely criticized by orthodox

Sunni ulama. In an Islamic state the basic question is an accepted definition of a Muslim.

### **Burning of Mosques**

Burning of mosques in Pakistan, incidentally, is a favorite pastime. In 1951, an Ahmadi mosque was burnt at Samundari (Lyallpur) and the peaceful worshippers in the mosque were mercilessly beaten. This incident led to widespread disturbances which continued till the middle of April 1953. The disturbances were the direct result of the rejection by Khawja Nazimmuddin, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, of an ultimatum by a deputation of the ulama demanding that Ahmadis should be declared a non-Muslim minority.

It was at this stage that the question of defining a Muslim arose. In June 1953 the Governor of the Punjab promulgated an ordinance setting up a Court of Inquiry into the disturbances. Mr. Justice Muhammad Munir was the President and Mr. Justice M. R. Kayani was the member. The report of this Court of Inquiry is popularly known as the Munir Report. For any student of Islam and Islamiyat this report should be compulsory reading.

### **Munir Report**

After listening to every important scholar and divine of Pakistan Mr. Justice Munir recorded: "Keeping in view the several definitions of a Muslim given by the Ulama, need we make any comment except that no two learned divines are agreed on this fundamental. If we attempt our own definition as each learned divine has done and that definition differs from that given by all others, we unanimously go out of the fold of Islam. And if we adopt the definition given by any one of the Ulama, we remain Muslims according to the view of that *alim* but *kafirs* according to the definition of every one else." (page 218 of the Report).

The Report went on to say "If the Ahmadis were *kafirs*, any one becoming an Ahmadi became liable to the death penalty because apostasy in an Islamic State is punishable with death.

On this the Ulama are practically unanimous. According to this doctrine, Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan, if he had not inherited his present religious beliefs but has voluntarily elected to be an Ahmadi, must be put to death. And the same fate should befall Deobandis and Wahabis (King Fahd of Saudi Arabia is a Wahabi), including Maulana Muhammad Shafi Deobandi, Member, Board of Talimat-i-Islami, attached to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, if Maulana Abul Hasanat Sayyed Muhammad Ahmad Qadri, or Raza Ahmad Khan Bareilvi, or any one of the numerous Ulama who are shown perched on every leaf of a beautiful tree in the *fatwa*, Ex. D.E. 14, were the head of such Islamic State. And if Maulana Muhammad Shafi Deobandi were the head of the State, he would put to death those who have pronounced Deobandis as *kafirs*. (page 219).

*Referring to the Shias, Mr. Justice Munir said that the genuineness of the fatwa by the Deobandis which says that Asna Ashari Shias are kafirs and murtads (apostates) had been certified by the records of Deoband; the copy of the fatwa was signed by all the teachers of the Darul Uloom, including Maulana Muhammad Shafi himself. The Sunni Ulama appearing before the Court of Inquiry seemed to have forgotten that the founder of Pakistan Mohammad Ali Jinnah was a Shia, the man who persuaded Jinnah to join the Muslim League, Syed Wazir Hasan, was a Shia and the man who financed the Muslim League in its days of need was also a Shia Talukdar of Oudh, Maharaja Mohammad Ali Mohammad Khan of Mahmudabad. It was the same Maharaja of Muhmudabad who risked his whole Talukdari to save the bathrooms of the Kanpur (Sunni) mosque (1913). The Sunnis who burnt the Ahamdi mosque in Samundari also forgot that Zafarullah Khan was asked to resign his post as Adviser to the Chairman of Narindra Mandal (Chamber of Princes) and accept the post of the first Foreign Minister of Pakistan on the invitation of their Shia founder of Pakistan.*

Justices Munir and Kayani concluded: "According to the

Shias all Sunnis are *kafirs*, and *Ahl-i-Quran*, namely persons who consider hadith to be unreliable and therefore not binding are, unanimously, *kafirs* and so are all independent thinkers. The net result of all this is that neither Shias nor Sunnis nor Deobandis nor Ahl-i-Hadith nor Barelvīs are Muslims and any change from one view to the other must be accomplished in an Islamic State with the penalty of death if the Government of the State is in the hands of the party which considers the other party to be *kafirs*." (page 219).

### Prophetic Tradition

By the time the Munir Report was presented the head of the *Jamaat-i-Islami*, Maulana Abul Ala Maududi, together with Maulana Abdul Sattar Niazi had been sentenced to death by a Military court. But the Munir Report and the Military court sentence were both bypassed exactly in the same manner as the Israeli government has ignored the Report of Mr. Yitzhak Kahan on the Beirut massacre. Ahmadis were ultimately declared non-Muslims by the late Mr. Bhutto and Maulana Maududi and Maulana Niaza were released. That is true to the *Hadith* (the Prophetic tradition) saying: "You (Muslims) will follow the ways of those that were before you (the Jews and the Christians) span for span and cubit for cubit until if they went down into the hole of a poisonous reptile you would follow them down."

The Ahmadi mosque burnt in Samundari in 1951 was not the first mosque which Pakistani 'Muslims' burnt nor is the Shia mosque burnt in Karachi the last. While Pakistan is returning to the medieval period of the Spanish Inquisition, those Pakistanis whose mosque was burnt in Samundari are returning to Europe to build new mosques; the last one was recently built in Cordova. For some Muslims the mosque has become a source of political power, mischief and agitations. But for others it is the house of God, a place of worship to find solace and peace, so they go out of the suffocating atmosphere of

Pakistan and build mosques in the more enlightened world of Europe.

### **Ideology of Pakistan**

General Zia-ul-Haq has said that Islam is the ideology of Pakistan. But the burning of the Ahmadi mosque at Samundari and the Shia mosque at Karachi raises a pertinent question: What is Islam? Is it the Islam of Deobandis (Mufti Mahmood) or Barelvīs (Maulana Shah Ahamd Nurani) or the *Jamaat-i-Islami* (Maulana Abul Ala Maududi) or the Shias of Ali (Ayatullah Khomeini)?

The question "What actually is Islam" has some urgency about it. For the non-Muslim observers there appears a phenomenon of a somewhat enigmatic nature. so many divergent groups of irreconcilable and conflicting views claim to the same religious basis. The stakes here are nothing less than the meaning of Islam itself. It is time that both the modernists and traditionalists reconsider the indispensability of secularism in political life. Secularism is not a favor to minorities, it provides protection, stability and security, both religious and political, to the majority community itself. Revivalists injecting religion into the affairs of state may ultimately find that the essential humanity of the God-man relationship has been sacrificed on the altar of political power. The majesty of Allah does not require centurion guards of hanging mullah.

(An article by Dr. Seyyad Barakat Ahmad, a retired member of the Indian Foreign Service, reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*, April 3, 1983.)

## THE VEDAS AND THE QURAN

The purpose of this article is to examine the place the revealed books of the Hindus, namely, the Vedas would occupy within Islam in the light of the Quran. It needs to be said at the very outset that the Quran contains no mention of the Vedas. The Quran does mention the scriptures or parts thereof, of some other religions, especially those of Judaism and Christianity but it does not refer to the Hindu scriptures in general or to the Vedas in particular. As the Quran does not make any direct statement about the Vedas its attitude to the Vedas cannot be directly determined, rather it will have to be inferred. To that extent this paper will be speculative or at least extrapolative in nature.

A survey of the relevant material in the Quran reveal the following salient facts regarding the general doctrine of revelation in the Quran.

(1) Revelation is universal in the sense that it has been vouchsafed to all the peoples of the earth. The 48th verse of Surah X is quite explicit on this point.

*"And for every nation there is a messenger."*

Not only has every nation received a *rasul* or messenger, all of them have also had prophets in a general sense. The 24th verse of Surah XXXV spells this out.

*"...and there is not a nation but a warner hath passed among them."*

Thus all the nations of the world have had messengers and prophets or their equivalents. Although the Quran does not say as such that all the nations of the world have received *revelations* the fact that they have had revealers, i.e., messengers, obviously implies that, as a messenger without a message makes no sense.

Nevertheless, the general statement that according to the



Quran every nation has had a messenger and every messenger a 'book' seems to be justified, especially as the Quran even mentions the various peoples being addressed by their messengers in their own language, just as the Prophet addressed the Arabs in Arabic.

(2) All the messengers and prophets of the world must be universally respected. This is explicitly stated in verse 285 of Surah II.

"The messenger believeth in that which hath been revealed unto him from his Lord and (so do) the believers. Each one believeth in Allah and his Angels and His scriptures and His messengers—We make no distinction between any of His messengers—and they say We hear, and we obey (Grant us) Thy forgiveness, our Lord Unto Thee is the journeying.

(3) There is, however, one other aspect of the situation. While the universality of revelation is asserted, the infallibility of scriptures other than the Quran is denied. Thus verses 63 and 64 of the Surah XVI run as follows:

"By Allah, we verily sent messengers unto the nations before thee, but the devil made their deeds fair seeming unto them. So he is their patron this day, and theirs will be a painful doom.

"And we have revealed the scriptures unto thee only that thou mayst explain unto them that wherein they differ, and (as) a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe."

The position of the Quran regarding revelation in general therefore may be summed up in the words of H.A.R. Gibb thus:

"At all times and to all peoples including the *jinn*, God has sent messengers or prophets to preach the unity of God and to warn men of the Judgement ... Muslims are

required to believe in all of them without distinction, although only a few are mentioned by name, or their histories related in the Koran.

Several earlier scriptures are referred to anonymously, but four are singled out by name ... all alike are to be believed and accepted, since they all confirm one another and the Koran in particular not only confirms earlier scriptures, but as the final revelation, clears up all uncertainties, and is the repository of perfect truth."

In the light of the general doctrine of revelation in the Quran it is clear that:

- (1) the Vedas, being the scriptures of the Hindus, must be regarded as "revealed by God" because revelation is a universal fact.
- (2) They must be respected by Muslims as they should respect all books revealed by God:
- (3) But they may not accept the Vedas as infallible but only the Quran.

What more information can we gain about revelation from the Quran on the basis of the actual mention of the scriptures of the Jews and the Christians?

The Quran seems to make the following points regarding the revealed books of the Jews and the Christians.

- (1) "That the Jews and Christians put themselves in a false position by rejecting one another 'though they both recite the book' [2:113/07]"

This comment obviously refers to the fact that the Quran regards the different scriptures as only parts of one Heavenly Book (III: 23,11:44 etc). How well does this apply to the Hindu case? It is well-known that only those schools of Indian philosophy are regarded as orthodox which accept Vedic authority. This means that those Indians who accept scrip-

tures other than the Vedas reject the Vedas, just as the Hindus *may* reject the scriptures of the non-Hindus such as the Buddhists and the Jains. But if all revelation is from God and from the Heavenly Tablet, the Mother of the Book, then obviously the Hindus, and say the Buddhists have placed themselves in a false position to the extent that they reject one another 'though they both recite the Book.'

- (2) "the Quran seems to criticize the Jews and Christians for 'dividing up their religion and becoming sects.' [6:159/60]"

This would certainly apply to Hinduism (and to Buddhism as well) wherein sectarian differentiation is notorious.

We may next quote verses 13-15 of Surah V which deal with the question of the textual condition of the scriptures of the Jews and the Christians. They run as follows:

"And because of their breaking their covenant, we have cursed them and made hard their hearts. They change words from their context and forget a part of that whereof they were admonished. Thou wilt not cease to discover treachery from all save a few of them. But bear with them and pardon them. Lo! Allah loveth the kindly.

"And with those who say: 'Lo! we are Christians.' We made a covenant, but they forgot a part of that whereof they were admonished. Therefore We have stirred up enmity and hatred among them till the Day of Resurrection, when Allah will inform them of their handiwork.

"Oh people of the Scripture! Now hath Our messenger come unto you, expounding unto you much of that which ye used to hide in the Scripture, and forgiving much, Now hath come unto you light from Allah and a plain Scripture."

From these verses it is clear that the Jews and the Christians are accused of (1) forgetting or losing parts of their scripture; (2) or concealing parts of their scriptures; and (3) of altering the text of the scripture? How do these points apply to the text of the Vedas?

(1) Certain sections of the Vedas are indeed believed to have been lost by the Hindus. As a matter of fact, "Vedic rites include *Srauta* and *smarta karma*. *Srauta karmas* are those rites which are ordained in the *sruti*. *Smarta karmas* are those which are learned from the *smrtis* but which are supposed to have been enjoined by a *sruti* text lost to us." The word *sruti* is another word for the Vedas; clearly loss of certain portions of the Vedas is involved.

(2) The Jews and the Christians are also accused of concealing parts of their scriptures. It is sometimes alleged that this is particularly the case with verses foretelling the coming of Muhammad.

In the Hindu case the scriptures were concealed from the Sudras and women at one stage in its history so in this sense the Hindus would be guilty of concealment though for different reasons. Moreover, not just parts but the entire Vedas were concealed.

(3) The Jews and Christians are also accused of deliberately "corrupting" or altering the scripture.

This aspect is somewhat difficult to apply to the Hindu case. It is generally held by scholars that the Vedas have been transmitted with remarkable accuracy—without corruption and alteration.

There is, however, one complicating factor which has a bearing not on the text but on its interpretation. The Quran, it is claimed, is forthright in its meaning. But the Hindu tradition is divided on the interpretation of the Vedas. Thus while both Mimamsa and Vedanta owe allegiance to the Vedas and

consider the Vedas to be the supreme *pramana*, the difference between them is with regard to the question; which portion of the Vedas is primary? While Mimamsa looks for the purport of the Vedas in the ritual sections, Vedanta finds it in the knowledge sections. Moreover, there are several systems of Vedanta itself. By contrast, the interpretation of the Quran seems to be relatively less clouded by controversy.

The following points therefore may be made about the Vedas in the light of the Quran.

- (1) that they are revealed by God;
- (2) that they are to be respected by the Muslims;
- (3) that though venerable they cannot be regarded as infallible by Muslims;
- (4) that the Hindus and the non-Hindus and followers of other religious traditions of Indian origin place themselves in a false position by differing among themselves like the Jews and the Christians;
- (5) that the Hindus further compromise their position by being full of contending sects;
- (6) that the Hindus have forgotten parts of the Vedas;
- (7) that the Hindus are also liable to the charge of concealing their scriptures like the Jews and the Christians, though in a different sense; and
- (8) that although the text of the Vedas may not have been corrupted or altered the lack of clarity about its message greatly diminishes its usefulness as a revelation especially when compared with the Quran which is described as a 'clear sign'.

(Professor Arvind Sharma in *The Hindu*, Madras, India, November 3, 1981.)

## JIHAD: DOES IT MEAN VIOLENCE?

The emphasis of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement on peaceful exhortation rather than violent clashes with opponents of Islam came under sharp focus recently in a case in Cape of Good Hope Provincial Division court of South Africa.

In the case, the so-called Muslim Judicial Council of Cape and four others had dubbed Ahmadies as heretics for interpreting JIHAD as striving in the cause and not necessarily the waging of war with non-Muslims!

We reproduce here, for the benefit of our readers, a portion of the comments made by the learned judge, Van Den Heever.

JUDGE VAN DEN HEEVER J: "I note on the papers that one of the alleged heresies stressed by the respondents on the part of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is that he urged that Jihad should be waged with the pen and not by violence. I would wish to stress that any resort to violence should, and I have no doubt, will be dealt with promptly and firmly by the police and the courts. I mention this because of the large audience present in Court, not because I find threats of violence by the Sunni against the Ahmadies established on papers, but because an argument has been advanced that such threats are implicit in or veiled, in other statements which were published.

I note with dismay that history and my own experience are confirmed by the documents before me which are weighty with theological dispute. Regrettably, there appears to be no subject about which mankind is more intolerant than religious beliefs despite the fact that most of those beliefs advocate peace, goodwill and harmony among mortals. The matter is one in which it is desirable that certainty should be obtained speedily and I propose to make an order now but to file proper reasons in due course. I would stress in making this order, that what I am dealing with is an interim interdict which, whatever the reasons are that I may advance, will not and cannot resolve the theological dispute between the two factions.

At this stage, I rule that the interdict be discharged, but the question of costs will be reserved for decision."

*(The Guidance, Ghana, December 1982)*

## SCIENCE: THE ISLAMIC LEGACY

The Arabs were the inheritors of the scientific tradition of late antiquity. They preserved it, elaborated it, and, finally, passed it on to Europe.

The story of how this came about is far from simple, and much research needs to be done before its details are completely understood, but the broad outlines are clear.

When Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Asia Minor, and Persia fell to Islamic forces in the seventh century they included a heterogeneous population. Although the cultivated classes of the former provinces of the Byzantine Empire spoke Greek, the people spoke a number of other languages—Coptic in Egypt and various Aramaic dialects in Syria and Iraq. These populations were for the most part Christian. In Persia, the majority language was Pahlavi—an earlier form of the language spoken there today—and the state religion was Zoroastrianism, with substantial Christian minorities and a few centers of Buddhism.

Throughout this immense area, there were two main scientific traditions. The first, and by far the most important, was that of Greece. The second was that of India, strongest in Persia because of the geographical proximity of the two countries.

At a surprisingly early date, the Arab ruling dynasty of the Umayyads, with its capital at Damascus, evinced an interest in Greek science. The little Umayyad audience hall and bath of Qasr 'Amra, built in the Syrian desert around A.D. 711—only 79 years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad—contains, on the inside of the dome, a painted representation of the zodiac made on a stereographic projection, perhaps showing a familiarity with the methods of Ptolemy. The same room contains paintings of personifications of History, Poetry and Philosophy; each figure is labeled in Greek.

The interest of the Umayyads in Greek science attested by the paintings at Qasr 'Amra is confirmed by early Muslim

historians, who record the experiments in alchemy made by Khalid ibn al-Yazid, a grandson of the first Umayyad caliph Mu'awiya.

Astronomy and alchemy were thus the first sciences to preoccupy the Muslims. It is noteworthy that they were also typical of the interests of the Greek scholars of late antiquity, particularly of those in Alexandria. In fact, it was to be this tradition, with its emphasis on mathematics, physics, astronomy and medicine, that was to be most fruitfully elaborated by Muslim scientists.

Although the great library of Alexandria, repository of the learning of the classical world, no longer existed at the time of the Arab conquests, the works of many of the Greek scholars who studied there now exist only in Arabic translation. How did this come about? How did the Arabs, who had little or no *direct* contact with Greek science, and in any case were unfamiliar with the Greek language, gain their very detailed knowledge of it?

The answer to this question lies in the continued presence of a Greek-speaking (or reading) educated class among the subject populations of the Muslim empire. When the Umayyad dynasty—the language of whose administration, until A.D. 699, was Greek—was supplanted by that of the Abbasids in A.D. 750, the center of the empire shifted eastward. A new capital, Baghdad, was built in Iraq on the banks of the Tigris. Here, not far from the old Persian capital of Ctesiphon, the character of the empire changed.

Although the Umayyads had made use of non-Arab, Greek-speaking civil servants, they had remained firmly Arab in their tastes and philosophy of rule, and had made little effort to attract the subject population to the religion of Islam. Now, all this was changed; the Abbasids from the beginning conceived of an Islamic polity based on religious affiliation rather than national origin. Baghdad became an international city, where Persians, Indians, Greeks, Sogdians—from beyond the Oxus—Armenians, Turks, Jews and Arabs lived side by side. This



inevitably led to a mingling of varied intellectual traditions; at the same time, the language of the court—and increasingly the people—was Arabic.

The Arabic-speaking intelligentsia of Baghdad were of course aware, through their contacts with Greek-speaking Muslims and Christians, of the great achievements of classical scientists. The university of Gondeshapur, the great intellectual center of Sassanid Persia, was not far from Baghdad. When the Council of Ephesus in 431 excommunicated Nestorius, his followers sought refuge in Persia, where the Sassanid Shahs welcomed them. The Nestorians brought with them a knowledge of two sciences which were, with their help, later to be cultivated by the Muslims—medicine and astronomy.

Another Christian sect, the Monophysites, fleeing Byzantine persecution 20 years later, also settled in Persia, as well as in Syria, where they founded schools at Edessa, Nisibis, Antioch and Beirut, where law and rhetoric were particularly studied. These two disciplines were also later to become fruitful areas of Muslim scholarship.

There was, therefore, no complete rupture between the late classical and the Muslim world, as far as the scientific tradition was concerned. A Greek-speaking physician like Alexander of Tralles, who was active at about the time the Prophet Muhammad was born—around A.D. 570—wrote a standard medical textbook which was later translated into Arabic and eventually from Arabic into Latin, and had considerable influence on medieval European medical practice. One of the most striking confirmations of this continuity is the fact that the Alexandrian Academy survived, albeit in shadowy form, into Islamic times, when it was moved to Antioch, where enrollment fell until only one professor and two students were left. One of these students in turn taught one of the foremost Abbasid translators, while the other taught a student who in turn instructed one of the greatest Arab philosophers, al-Farabi.

The Indian scientific tradition mingled with that of Greece at Gondeshapur and other centers of Christian learning in Persia. The Indians were particularly concerned with mathematics, astrology and the scientific study of grammar. About the year 600—during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad—Indian mathematicians developed the symbol zero and the system of place notation. This invention, first mentioned in the Islamic cultural area in a Syriac text written in A.D. 662, when the Umayyad caliph Mu'awiya was ruling in Damascus, revolutionized the study of mathematics and made possible the great achievements of Muslim mathematicians.

It was during the early Abbasid period, however, that the tentative beginnings made under the Umayyads blossomed into a true scientific renaissance. Several of the early Abbasid caliphs made a systematic effort to translate Greek and Indian scientific texts into Arabic.

This effort began during the reign of the second Abbasid caliph, al-Mansur, who founded Baghdad and ruled from A.D. 754 to 775. Al-Mansur sent embassies to the Byzantine emperor to ask for Greek mathematical texts—in particular for the *Elements* of Euclid; the famous al-Ma'mun, later did the same. Ibn Khaldun, writing in North Africa in the 14th century, but making use of a wide variety of earlier sources, describes the remarkable efforts made by these caliphs to enrich the intellectual life of the Muslim community:

When the Byzantine emperors conquered Syria, the scientific works of the Greeks were still in existence. Then God brought Islam, and the Muslims won their remarkable victories, conquering the Byzantines as well as all other nations. At first, the Muslims were simple, and did not cultivate learning, but as time went on, and the Muslim dynasty flourished, the Muslims developed an urban culture which surpassed that of any other nation.

They began to wish to study the various branches of philosophy, of whose existence they knew from their

contact with bishops and priests among their Christian subjects. In any case, man has always had a penchant for intellectual speculation. The Caliph al-Mansur therefore sent an embassy to the Byzantine emperor, asking him to send him translations of books on mathematics. The emperor sent him Euclid's *Elements* and some works on physics.

Muslim scholars studied these books, and their desire to obtain others was whetted. When al-Ma'mun, who had some scientific knowledge, assumed the caliphate, he wished to do something to further the progress of science. For that purpose, he sent ambassadors and translators to the Byzantine empire, in order to search out works on the Greek sciences and have them translated into Arabic. As a result of these efforts, a great deal of material was gathered and preserved.

Other Muslim historians record the arrival of an Indian scientist named Manka at the Abbasid court in A.D. 770, and he seems to have had a considerable influence on the mathematicians and astrologers of Baghdad, although we know little of the precise nature of this influence.

Under al-Ma'mun, a more systematic effort was made to translate Greek scientific texts into Arabic. He founded an institute for the purpose, called the *Bait al-Hikma*, The House of Wisdom, and staffed it with salaried Christian and Muslim scholars. The work of translation was complex. Christian translators first rendered the Greek texts into Syriac, the language with which they were most familiar. These preliminary versions were then put into Arabic, with Muslim Arabic-speakers correcting them for style.

Muslim scientists were much influenced by the Greek notion that the science of mathematics was the key to all other sciences. Aristotle, whom the Arabs called "The Foremost Teacher," had inscribed above the door of his house: "Let no one enter who does not have a knowledge of mathematics."

This could equally well serve as a motto for the House of Wisdom. We have seen that one of the first Greek books brought to Baghdad from Constantinople was a copy of Euclid's *Elements*. This was translated into Arabic a number of times, as were several of the Greek commentaries upon it, in particular that of the inventor and mathematician, Hero of Alexandria, whose experiments with automata in the third century B.C. were to be so strangely echoed by Muslim scientists. As late as the 13th century, Nasir al-Din al-Tusi wrote a detailed commentary on the *Elements*, which was among the first Arabic texts to be printed in the original in the 16th-century Italy.

Many other Greek mathematical works found their way into Arabic through the efforts of the scholars at the House of Wisdom and their successors. Euclid, Apollonius of Perga, Nichomachus of Gerasa—the magnificent classical ruin presently called Jerash, in Jordan—Menelaus, Archimedes and Theodosius of Tripoli were all translated at an early date, as were Ptolemy, Autolycus, Dorotheus, Aristarchus, Hipparchus, Theon of Alexandria, Aratus and Geminus of Rhodes. A number of these works were later translated into Latin and Hebrew and thus became known to medieval Europe.

The exact science—mathematics, astronomy and optics — perhaps occupied pride of place for Muslim scholars, but the natural sciences, particularly medicine and its ancillary disciplines, were also assiduously cultivated. Again, the first phase was translation of Greek medical writings—particularly those by or attributed to Galen and Hippocrates—into Arabic. There then followed a period of original research by Muslim scientists, often leading to major revisions of the received tradition, and finally a period of codification in which the results of previous research were incorporated into convenient handbooks. Botany, particularly in so far as it was related to *materia medica*, received its first impetus from an illuminated copy of Dioscorides sent by the Byzantine emperor to the Abbasid court; this fundamental classical work was quickly

rendered into Arabic, and many corrections and new plant identifications were added to it, particularly by scholars in North Africa and Muslim Spain. It was in Spain too that the first scientific works on agronomy were composed, works that are a prime source for our knowledge of medieval agricultural techniques in the Muslim world—techniques that were passed to Europe and greatly increased productivity.

Aristotle's work *Generation of Animals* was early translated into Arabic, and was made use of by al-Jahiz in his amusing *Book of Animals*, which includes a great deal of linguistic, literary and historical information in addition to passages of accurate, if amusing, scientific observation. Various handbooks of veterinary medicine were also composed, although these have so far received little attention from scholars.

Very few works of Greek science failed to find their way into Arabic during the Abbasid period. For one of the few times in human history, a culture with its own language, religion and customs embarked upon the extraordinary task of translating an alien intellectual tradition into its own language and fitting it into its own conceptual framework. In the process, old errors were corrected, and the experimental method, the basis of all scientific progress, was clearly enunciated. For one of the great achievements of medieval Muslim scientists was their willingness to correct the texts they transmitted. Just as they recomputed the circumference of the earth, and corrected the geographical information in Ptolemy on the basis of their own observations, so they dared question even Aristotle.

The works of Muslim scientists reached medieval Europe through Latin and Hebrew translations, for the most part made in Spain and somewhat later in Sicily. As early as the 10th century, astronomical works were being translated into Latin in Catalonia, and perhaps elsewhere in Spain. Later, during the 12th and 13th centuries, the works of Avicenna (Ibn Sina), Averroes (Ibn Rushd), Avempace (Ibn Bajja) and a host of others were translated into Latin and in the 13th century, at the court of Alfonso the Wise, into Spanish. At the very time

that Baghdad fell to the Mongols, in 1258, and the Abbasid caliphate came to an end, scribes in Europe were preserving the Muslim scientific tradition. This is why, just as many Greek texts now survive only in Arabic dress, many Arabic scientific works only survive in Latin.

It is upon this tenuous and almost miraculous line of transmission that the scientific achievements of the modern world are based: the work of scholars of many different religious and linguistic backgrounds carefully transmitting, correcting and adding to a tradition that stretches back to Aristotle and beyond, each bound to his predecessor by a shared devotion to truth.

(Paul Lunde in *Aramco World Magazine*, May-June, 1982.)



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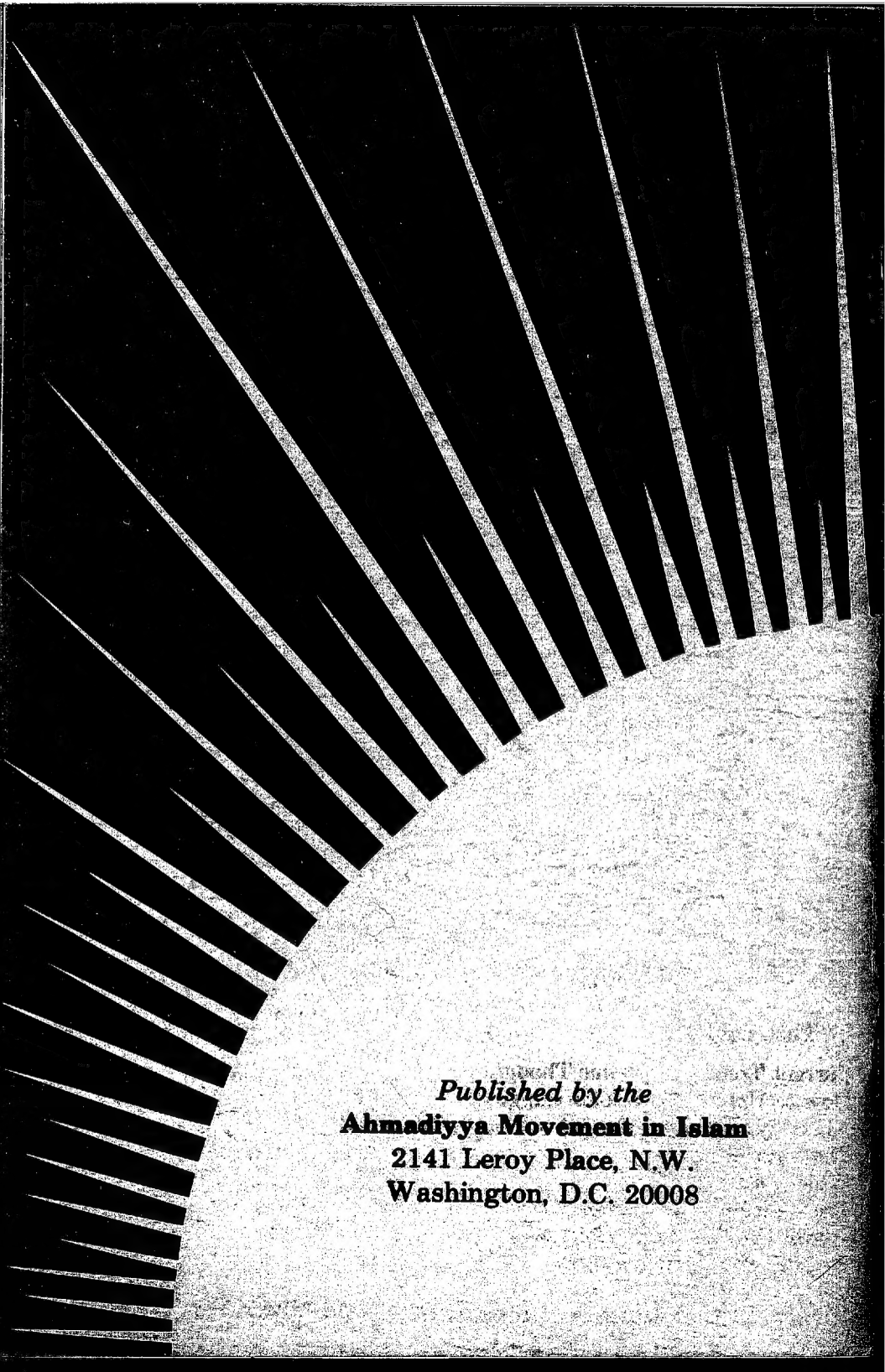
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